

85HA SCARECROW SPRING 1905

WINTER: ITA bld A VEN & A ROM; RUS A mos r STP, rem F swe;
TUR bld F SMY.
AUSTRIA (Wall): F tun-NAF; A BER S ita A mun.
ENGLAND (K Brown): A KIE & A RUH \$ fre A bur-mun(NSO);
F nth-NWY; F HEL S A kie; F nwy-SWE(S F DEN).
FRANCE (J Ellis): A hol-BEL; A bel-PIC; A GAS-spa(S F MID);
A bur-mar(d,r par,otb).
GERMANY (Daklyn): A mos-sev(Insu); A stp-fin(Insu);
F lvn-stp/sc(Insu).
ITALY (Holley): A ven-PIE; A rom-TYS; F nap-ION;
A mar-BUR(S A MUN); A BOH S A mun; F SPA/SC H(S F LYD);
A BUD \$ tur A gal(otm).
RUSSIA (Mallia): A STP-mos(S A WAR); A SIL S A war.
TURKEY (Johnston): F SMY-AEG; F gre-ALB; F con-BLA;
A tyo-TRI; A gal-vie; A rum-SER; A mos-LVN;
A SEV-mos(S A UKR).

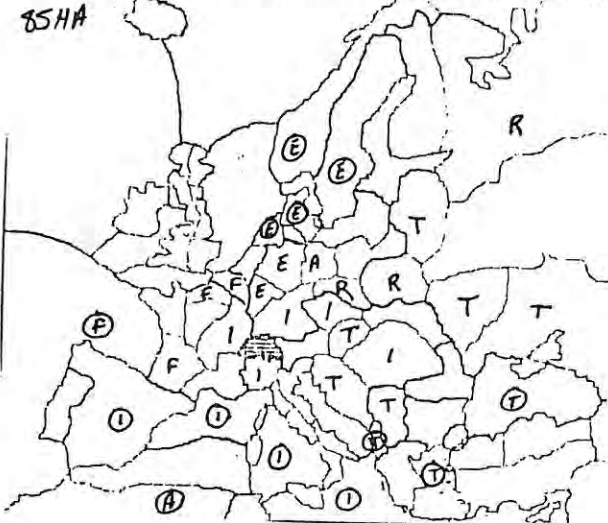
FALL 1905 is due October 13.
scarecrow press

THE WALL-MELINDA: Take me, I'm yours, give me your all (and survival).

PARIS: Prime Minister Jeff Ellis has been on the brink of a nervous breakdown, sources report. His attempts to resolidify his military are feeble at best, according to Gen. Jacques Racque, the French Minister of War. "Ever since the year of internal disorder, where no units moved at all, the French military has been on a downfall. With the Lord's help, and the mercy of the fabulous Italian people, we can pull through and be proud and triumphant once again (sniffle sniffle sob sob)". General Racque then broke into tears, reminiscing about earlier times when France was respected and admired.

ZAKROCZM: Six psychologists sat around a round table in the town meeting hall. The table had been designed like a doughnut, round with a small hole in the middle. At the center of the table, in the center of the small round hole at the center of the table, there was a swivel chair. Bernie sat atop that swivel chair that was in the center of the small round hole at the center of the table around which six psychologists sat around the round table in the town meeting hall. Having heard this description from Bernie, as to what was going on at the town meeting hall, the six psychologists, each in their turn, asked Captain Bernie, "Now, Sir! You say that your Cessna landed just outside that latrine and you were thrown clear, but not really clear since you were thrown in the latrine, and everyone except several little girls thought you were dead, is that so?" With this question fired at him rapidly as his swivel chair turned around and around, Captain Bernie complained about the blur he was experiencing. What is that you're playing with?", one of the six psychologists asked Captain Bernie. "Just my diplomacy set!", replied the dizzy captain, trying to straighten his cap. Suddenly, Captain Bernie pulled himself atop the round table, grabbed his diplomacy units, and rushed to the latrine. There, he threw the diplomacy units into the latrine, stood back, stroked his beard, and smiled slowly. The six psychologists, each out of his breath in their own turn, asked rather starkly of Captain Bernie, "Why did you throw your diplomacy units into the latrine?" Captain Bernie replied, "Maybe if they are all the same color, it might help!" The six psychologists looked at each other, each in their own

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[illegible]

B6CD SURFING BIRD SPRING 1901 delayed

AUSTRIA: David Pierce
ENGLAND: Jeff Ellis
FRANCE: Scott Drane
GERMANY: Joey Bishop

ITALY: George Atkins
RUSSIA: Jason Russ
TURKEY: Bernie Oaklyn

As I misprinted Jason Russ' address in the gamestart, the first season is delayed to OCTOBER 13, 1986. Players have been notified.

[REDACTED]

86?? BOP TIL YOU DROP (MENSA 23) GAME START

AUSTRIA: Stephen Shellnut
ENGLAND: Curtis Kueker
FRANCE: David Coufal
GERMANY: Steven Wallis

SPRING 1901 is due OCTOBER 13, 1986.

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BAHNHOF ZOO & BAHNHOF FRIEDRICHSTRASSE DELAYED

I've reluctantly agreed to a delay. Players in both games asked for more time to negotiate with new players. I realize that using standbys is not the norm in Europe, but here we do not grant delays when they enter the game. Positions are noted below, please look for new addresses in the address list, and the new deadline is OCTOBER 13, 1986.

84AZ BAHNHOF ZOO (FALL and WINTER 1908 due)

ENGLAND(Schunck) A LON; A EDI; F NAT; F BOT; A MOS; A LVN;
F ENG; F NTH; F DEN; F MID.
FRANCE(Coughlan) A UKR; A BUR; A MUN; A GAL; A BOH; F MAR;
A GAS; A POR; F BRE.
ITALY(Bouwman) F PIE; F LYD; A TYO; A VIE; A VEN; A BUL;
F AEG; F WES; F NAF.
RUSSIA(Jacobs) F BLA; A RUM; A ARM.
TURKEY(Gautron) A CON; F SMY; F ANK.

Proposed draws: EFI, EF, and I: not voting is no. Orders in from England, France and Turkey.

85HG BAHNHOF FRIEDRICHSTRASSE (SPRING 1903 due)

AUSTRIA(Caws) A SER; F AEG; A BUD; A VIE.
ENGLAND(McIntyre) A NWY; F DEN; A SWE; F NTH; F ENG; A LON.
FRANCE(Strauss) A BRE; A BUR; A GAS; F MID; F SPA/SC.
GERMANY(Smith) A MUN; A BER; A BEL; A HOL; F HEL.
ITALY(Baker) F NAP; A TUN; F ION; A TRI; A VEN.
RUSSIA(Gardner) A GAL; A WAR; F STP/SC; A RUM; F SEV.
TURKEY(Pater) F SHY; F CON; A ALB; A BUL.

Orders in from all but Italy.

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UNITED HOCKEY

The rules are enclosed for those of you signed up. I'm also sending them to anyone else I know of who is interested in United. To play, send me the gamefee of \$6.00 and a roster costing \$7,000,000 or less. Teams entered by October 13 will be included in the initial schedule, and have games that month. I'll accept entries until the next deadline, November 8 or so. I'd appreciate any plugs, the rules are available for a SASE for people not already in BIG HITS.

This issue is technically a day late, but I do have a good excuse. I've fulfilled one of my lifelong dreams. I now own a VW Beetle. It's a '72 with just 75,000 miles on it, and it's my favorite color, orange. I spent all day Monday tuning it up. Frauke thinks I'm crazy for getting a car I want to work on, but even she likes it.

I'll give you an extra day for the deadline, but I'll accept only new orders in the mail on the 13th. Changes must be in by the 11th.

I've discovered I mailed out my file copy of the June BIG HITS, issue 86:6. Could one of you send me a copy? I'll give you 50 cents sub credit if I receive it a week before the deadline, even if I get more than one. Thanks.

With the article on phoned orders this time it's only appropriate to tell you that the times convenient for me to be called have changed again. I no longer work weeknights, I have a new job in the newsroom of the Star and Tribune on weekend nights; Friday and Saturday, 11pm to 7am. So calling any evening is OK, but not at all on Sundays. Til later...

THE TELEPHONE AND THE GM

Taking orders over the telephone is a pain in the butt for any GM. But NMRs are a even bigger pain in the butt, so most of us are willing to put up with the small pain of answering the telephone so we don't have as many unordered units to contend with.

However, accepting orders over the phone opens up a new can of worms for the GM. When do you set the deadline? What happens if a player wakes you up in the middle of the night? What if a player impersonates another player on the phone? What if a player misorders a unit, forgets about a draw vote, or omits a unit? What if your wife takes down the orders? What if someone's husband calls with his wife's orders? What if you leave your phone off the hook on deadline day? What if you lose a set of phoned orders?

The biggest disadvantage of telephoned orders for the GM is that he gets interrupted to take them down. I can choose my own time to get my mail, and I do it when it's convenient. When orders come over the phone, I'm usually in the middle of something else, and in fact I have a better chance of misplacing a phoned order than a mailed order. That's ironic since a phoned order is the only type a player can be 100% sure that the GM has received it. By the way, I will at times refuse to accept orders when you call me. I'll suggest a time to call me back that is more convenient. I've also decided not to taking phoned orders at all except the last week before deadline.

I always set a general deadline for phoned orders, usually the night before the postal deadline. However, this is not a strict deadline, and I'll accept orders over the phone anytime before I've begun adjudicating the game. The phone deadline is the absolute earliest I'll begin adjudicating. Once in a great while I actually do start at that time, but usually not.

A GM has no choice but to be pretty trusting about phoned orders. Sure, I've talked to a lot of my players over the phone and can recognize their voices, but certainly not all of them. Most of the time I've got to believe that the player on the phone is who he says he is. I've never had a problem with players claiming they never talked to me when I received a phoned order for them. I'd be very receptive to such a complaint if the player had other orders in to me. But if a player with no other orders made such a complaint, I'd tell him that any orders are better than none.

I say that I am not responsible for phoned orders. That means that if you say my notes are incorrect, there's nothing I can do about it, unlike a mailed order where I can always double check what you actually wrote. The best I can do is to repeat what I have down to you while you are still on the phone. I always try to remember to do this.

I do accept orders that are taken by Frauke; she's played the game so she's familiar with what to do. Make sure you

tell her clearly who you are, and the game, country and season you're giving orders for. Other people may answer my phone, but I'd only give orders to the two of us.

We do have an answering machine, but even that is not 100% reliable. One time Kevin Tighe left orders on it, and I heard them and saved them to take down later. That night the cats unplugged the machine, and the message was lost.

When you call me with orders, I am being a scribe only. I will take down what you tell me, and I will not tell you if you misorder or omit a unit. I will not remind you to vote on draws. If you ask me what your units are or how many you have, I will get the last results and tell you. But as with mailed orders, you're on your own to get them correct.

Like many GMs, I offer NMR insurance where I offer to call you after the deadline if I am missing orders from you. For this I need a positive cash balance in your account with me and your current phone number. If you moved, I assume you have changed phone numbers and won't call unless you've given me the new number. I try to indicate on each mailing label whether or not I have a phone number on file for you. I regard your number as private information, and will not give it to others unless you've published it or you give me permission. NMR calls are the same as any other; I won't give you any information about the game unless you ask.

Even if you don't have NMR insurance, I do like to have your phone number. Often to call is the easiest to clear up a GMing error. Also, when adjustments are complicated, you can ask to be called with the adjustment results to give me appropriate orders for the next season. (But always mail in conditionals in case I can't reach you.)

Even after the results are done and in the mail, the GM's problems with the phone are not over. What if someone wants results over the phone? I used to do this, but now I'll refuse unless it's been a week since I mailed them or there is some emergency. Otherwise the player who calls has too big an advantage in early negotiations.

I really don't mind the occasional call. I know sometimes we get busy and forget the deadline. But if you get in the habit of calling or waiting to be called each season, you will get burned sometime. I guarantee it.

SOME COMMENTS ON DIAS

BRUCE LINSEY: As for your comments on the publisher's handbook, I'm glad you liked it. You are right to say that DIAS isn't covered very well in the handbook. I'm thinking of updating the project in 6 to 8 months or so, and maybe at that time I'll find someone to cover the subject more in depth. (Check out page G-29, though; there is a bit of discussion there.)

MARK LARZELERE: Regarding DIAS, I do not have the same policy as I did when I started GMing in 1980. I haven't opened a DIAS game since 1982! I think that DIAS is a good rule, but most players do not understand it or like it and that a strict "DIAS only" policy by a GM is not realistic. A GM opening a DIAS game should make it clear that a game is DIAS and that all players know this. Possibly he might have players vote on whether the game will be DIAS with their S'01 orders.

You mention that a player can veto all non-DIAS draws if he wants, but if non-DIAS draws are being submitted to be voted on, the player has to include his reasons for vetoing the draw in his negotiations. This is something he shouldn't have to do. By forcing the players to physically take and divide up the centers of the countries that are not to be in the draw, DIAS makes it more likely for a "win" situation to occur. The player can say he's sending his units to take certain centers so that the draw can be reduced, and then set himself up to win. Without DIAS, if the player says he's willing to accept a certain draw, and the country to be left out of the draw is willing to vote for the draw, a player has a much harder time explaining to the other players why he must send in his units to eliminate the smaller country. This makes the game harder to win.

((Which is the reason I don't reveal draw votes. The player can then say that obviously the smaller country is vetoing the draw and therefore must be eliminated. By not revealing individual votes and making NVR=no, I'm hoping to make it more difficult to pass a draw and encourage more wins. It must be working; the last five regular games to end here (Let It Be, Nebraska, Espresso Love, Twist and Shout and Bad Brain) have all been solo wins or concessions. The last draw was over two years ago in Casablanca.))

WELCOME TO
BIG HITS OF MID-AMERICA (VOLUME 3)

This is supposed to be a bit of an introduction to the zine. It's also a sales pitch, since the zine needs new players all the time to keep going, to keep from getting stale. I don't offer fancy print or 100 page issues to attract you. This is a warehouse zine (that is, games only with very little reading). If you are interested in just playing Dip, you can play here quite cheaply, without having to pay for a mega-sized zine. No subscription is required, your gamefee covers everything. For those who prefer reading to playing, I also publish a zine POMMES MIT MAYO with only a letter column, no games. I'll happily send you both.

BIG HITS offers well-run Dip games at a reasonable price. The games have deadlines every 4 weeks, and the results are in the mail within 3 days. I also run international games with 8 week deadlines. I always keep a waiting list.

Promptness in game reports is the best thing a GM can offer. Fast results keeps games going and players interested and indeed very few players drop out from my games. I try to keep frustrating dead time between seasons to a minimum. I am an amateur publisher and there are personal considerations at times, but I get a great deal of satisfaction from being fair and prompt.

As far as credentials, I've been active in the hobby since 1980. I started GMing that same year, and have published a zine since 1981. I converted to a warehouse zine in 1984. I'm currently a co-director of the hobby's US Orphan Service, which places games of GMs who disappear.

OPENING LINE: Many pages of house rules can be covered by a basic rule: "Games will be run in a fair and equitable manner, with no irregularities as defined by the BNC."

LICENSE FEES gamefees and such: There is no sub fee per issue for player and standbys; you pay a flat game fee and receive the zine as long as you're in a game. There is a discount for starting a second game (since obviously my costs don't increase when you already receive the zine.) The gamefees are \$6.50 for first time players and \$3.50 for games after that (based on 22 cents postage.)

I also keep a list of standby players to replace those who resign or drop out. I choose first those standbys not currently in a game, or anyone who volunteers to be at the top of the list. A new subber may join the list without signing up for a game. I just ask that you keep \$3.00 in an account with me. You then get the discount on games you sign up for later. I'm also more than happy to trade zines if you play here, and I'll work out individual arrangements.

I keep accounts for all players of money for NMR insurance and future gamefees. It is not necessary to keep any money in this account unless you want NMR insurance.

When you sign up for a game, you are welcome to submit a preference list of countries. Otherwise I'll assign you a list randomly. Gamefees are not due until the game begins.

WRITING DOWN THE NOTES submitting orders: I have very few strict requirements for the orders you submit. Just make them clear and legible and tell me which game they are for. Written orders must be signed. No having another player write your orders unless you've made prior arrangement with me. You may revoke this arrangement at any time. Put orders for different games on separate sheets, and use one side of the paper only. Using a single postcard for two sets of orders is OK if they are clearly separated.

Here are some suggestions that are not always required. Include the season and the date on the orders (the date is important if you later make a change; I'll use the orders with the latest date). Type or print your orders neatly in a single column. Use paper no smaller than 3x5, and keep all other correspondence to me on separate sheets.

Telephoned orders are OK only during the week before deadline. Just call at a reasonable time (10 am to 10 pm Central time). I never promise to be home or to answer the phone, and I cannot be responsible for any errors on phone orders. I usually have an answering machine hooked up; feel free leave your orders on it. Special delivery is OK, but for any other delivery service please make prior arrangements with me.

I accept "implied orders" where a build or retreat is not stated but the unit is listed in position for the next season's moves. When reading your orders I always assume you are attempting a legal move. I accept standing orders for players who wish to use identical orders in subsequent seasons. This option will be used when possible instead of NMRing countries of 3 centers or less.

HITTING THE STAGE deadlines: The due date for next season is printed with each issue. The deadline is the mail I receive that day. I also print a phone deadline that is very flexible, it is the absolute earliest I will begin adjudicating. If I haven't yet adjudicated, I will always accept late orders rather than take an NMR.

There are usually two deadlines per game year; one for spring retreats and fall moves, the other for fall retreats, winter adjustments and spring moves. Seasons will be separated upon the request of 1/3 the players or GM's discretion.

NO SHOWS "no moves received": If I don't have orders from a player, all units will hold, retreats will go off the board, builds are omitted, and removals made per the rulebook. A standby will also be called. If the player misses a second consecutive deadline, the standby takes over the position. A NMR in Spring 1901 will have Nanook Neutral Moves made: (A: A vie-tri, F tri-alb; E: F edi-nth, A lvp-yor; F: A par-bur, F bre-mid; G: F kie-hel, A ber-kie; I: F nap-ion; R: F stp-fin, A war-ukr; T: A con-bul, F ank-con. Any other unit holds.) I will delay a season rather than adjudicate with 1/2 or more the players missing orders.

I offer NMR insurance. If I have time and I have your current phone number and a balance in your account, and I am missing your orders, I will call you once. You can then give me your orders or call me back within an hour. The cost of the call is deducted from your account. I will only call during reasonable hours, between 10 am and 10 pm your time. I do not promise to call, but I will either call all NMR'd players with insurance or none.

DIGITAL MASTER results: I use the ROHAN system of game reports with some modifications of my own. Final locations of units are in CAPS. Cut supports have dollar signs. Broken /c/onvoys have /slashes/. A chart showing supply centers GAINED and (lost) is given each fall. Errors not noted before the next deadline will stand. Abbreviations are H=hold, d=dislodged, r=retreat, ann=annihilated, imp=impossible, amb=ambiguous, OTB=off the board, OTM=ordered to move, NSU=no such unit, NSD=not so ordered.

Press is encouraged. It is black for all games; that is it can be datelined from anywhere. This includes your or anyone else's country, name, centers, hometown or nickname. Guest press will be labeled as such. Press will be censored for reasons of space only.

DISCHORD complaints: These guidelines cannot cover all possible situations, though the opening line should cover anything not specifically mentioned. If there is a policy you disagree with, please let me know. If I don't feel strongly about it I may change it. I'm also willing to put specific proposals for individual games to a vote (for instance, press policy, DIAS or making draw votes public).

If you feel I have treated you unfairly, you should first let me know. If we can't work it out among ourselves, I'll suggest we turn to a mutually agreeable ombudsman. I don't promise to automatically abide by the ombudsman's decision, but at the very least I'll give it serious consideration. I have never had such a serious complaint in the 6 years I've GMed, and I don't really expect the situation to ever come up. Since the games I run belong ultimately to the players, I will abide by any unanimous vote to move to a new GM.

LAST DANCE ending a game: A game can end 3 ways: 1) a player gains 18 centers, 2) a concession to one or more players passes unanimously, or 3) no centers change hands for 3 consecutive game years and the GM sees no hope of resolving the stalemate and declares a draw of all survivors. Concession proposals will be accepted beginning in Spring 1905. Not voting on a proposal while submitting orders is "no" (I assume if you send in orders that you wish to continue the game). NMR or standing orders is "yes" to any proposal. I don't make individual votes public, you may make your own votes public in the press. You may submit a standing vote of yes to all proposals or yes to all proposals including you.

EUROPEAN REMIX international games: These games have 8 week deadlines and have seasons grouped in European fashion: spring moves and retreats together, then fall moves, retreats and winter builds together. Retreats and builds can be made conditional on the results of the previous season, and you may list several options in the order you wish them considered. A retreat not ordered will be made by Just's Right Hand Rule. No NMR insurance for international games.

All questions and comments are welcome!

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